line 3, delete the entire line;

line 6, change "Here, the" to --The--;

line 9, change "signed" to --sign--;

line 10, change "ward" to --word--.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-6 by rewriting same to read as follows.

--1. (Amended) A vector search method [in which] comprising the steps of calculating a difference error between a prediction vector and an input vector [is calculated in such a way] so that combinations of factors respectively multiplied by a plurality of basic vectors are changed according to the Gray code.

--2. (Amended) [A] The vector search method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein an intermediate value Gu_+ obtained by calculation of a synthetic vector created according to a sign word u of the Gray code$_+$ is expressed by an intermediate value Gi_+ obtained by a calculation of a synthetic vector created according to an adjacent sign word i different from said sign word u only in a predetermined bit position v_+ and a change ΔGu calculated by utilizing the Gray code characteristic, and

said ΔGu is used to express a change $\Delta Gu'$ between an intermediate value Gi' according to another sign word i' in said Gray code and an intermediate value Gu' according to an adjacent sign word u' different from said sign word i' only in a predetermined bit position v.

--3. (Amended)[A] The vector search method as claimed in

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Claim 2, wherein said prediction vector is created through a prediction synthesis filter by synthesizing said synthetic vector and a vector based on a past signal from a sound source [signal].

--4. (Amended)[A] The vector search method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein said sign word u' in said Gray code differs from said sign word u only in one bit position w_t excluding the predetermined bit position v, and

said change ΔGu' is expressed as a sum of said change ΔGu already obtained according to said sign word u of said Gray code and a difference between said change ΔGu and said change ΔGu'.

--5. (Amended)[A] The vector search method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the [calculation to minimize] calculating of the difference error between said prediction vector and said input vector includes minimizing said difference error and is a calculation to determine [such] a synthetic vector from synthetic vectors created by synthesizing basic vectors for the sign word i of the Gray code that [makes maximum] maximizes an inner product with said input vector, and

said inner product is expressed[,] by using two variables Ci and Gi, as [Ci2/Gi] Ci^2/Gi, whose value is made maximum.

--6. (Amended) [A] The vector search method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the [calculation to minimize] calculating of the difference error between said prediction vector and said input vector includes minimizing said difference error and is a calculation to determine [such] a synthetic vector from synthetic vectors created by synthesizing basic vectors for the sign word i of the Gray code that [makes minimum an Euclid] minimizes a

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